'PET FEARS' ARE QUEER THINGS—WHAT'S YOURS?

By JOBYNA HUNTER

Illustrations by J. NORMAN LYND

Philadelphia Jack O'Brien has had some fears, believe him! One thing he can't stand is harsh words.

Mayor Hylan found it hard work remembering something he was afraid of. But he succeeded finally. He is afraid of snakes. They give him a queer feeling

The big traffic cop near the Woolworth Building is scared of little dogs. The smaller they are the less he likes 'em

EVERY ONE is afraid of something. There was never a hero who wasn't a coward at heart. Admit your fear. Yank it up out of your subconsciousness. Recognize it for a memory. Then see it turn tail and run.

These more or less profound reflections are the result of an attempt of the writer to conquer a ridiculous fear of escalators. Like Eugene Field's small boy, I "ain't *afraid" of* "bugs or worms or mice"—though I can't say I'm fond of them—but escalators terrify me. I know my fears are absurd. I never heard of anyone being hurt on an escalator, and yet the fear persists. The slow and sinister approach of the monster perhaps stirs some old memory buried deep and as yet unanalyzed. Perhaps it only recalls a funny Chaplin film I saw ages ago in which an escalator acted as a demon obstacle to Charlie's progress. I cannot decide. Some day I shall conquer this fear and engage with gayety any escalator in the universe. Probably when I am old I shall "take to" escalators as some other old ladies take to bridge or knitting and my son-in-law or some other victim will have to escort me to an escalator and watch me ride up and down. At present my only hope lies in a sympathetic exchange of experiences. I must have company in my fears. I must find out what other people are afraid of.

"All right," says my spiritual adviser. "Let's put it up to the heroes. I'll wager you'll find some fear among them. We'll make a list of heroes and heroines in varying professions and see what they're afraid of." So we close thus: a soldier, a tiger tamer, a policeman, a suffrage leader, a girl reporter, a politician and public speaker, a boxer and trainer of boxers, a musician, a psychoanalyst, and last, but far from least, a mayor.

Then the fear quest started.

The Mayor Tries To Be Kind "In His Rough Way"

Mayor Hylan had just come from the last hearing on the MacMonnies statue of Civic Virtue, where hundreds of women had been expressing their views and where some had even made the embarrassing suggestion that the Mayor should act as model for a new statue.

He was in a serious mood.

"What are you afraid of?" I asked.

"Nothing," said our hero.

"You're not even afraid of lady orators?"

"I am not," he said firmly. "I like the ladies—God bless 'em—and I always try in my rough way to be kind to them. That's all they want. Just a little kindness."

"Didn't you ever have a fear in your life? Not even one little shudder over a bug or something?" I asked.

The Mayor pondered. "Well," he said, "your coming at me suddenly like this, I can't just remember that I ever had, though I don't pretend to be a hero at all. But wait a minute. There's snakes. I'm not exactly afraid of them, but they give me a queer feeling—anything like that, crawly or creepy. I don't like 'em."

"Snakes. Mayor Hylan doesn't exactly fear them, but doesn't like them," I put down. He was disappointing. I had hoped he'd have a good lively fear of tigers or something like that. Perhaps a hero all covered with medals would produce a more satisfactory fear.

In the files of a popular monthly you may read of such a hero, who belongs here in New York. He is Colonel William Hayward, United States District Attorney, hero of the 15th Infantry, which later in the great conflict became the 369th and proved its metal by being "first to the Rhine."

Colonel Hayward received the Croix de Guerre with gold palm and star, the Distinguished Service medal and notable citations.

"What are you afraid of?" I asked him.

"Spiders," he replied promptly. "Scared to death of 'em. You see, once out West I was badly bitten by a lot of spiders. Turned back my army cot and found a lot of 'em had pitched their tents there. That was awful. Worse than any gunfire. I've always been afraid of spiders—was even before that. Can't tell why, but the fear is there. My son-in-law, Philip Plant, is afraid of bees. Can't stand to have even a buzz near him."

This was better.

"Fear is a curious thing," continued the Colonel. "You can't have a real hero without it. I have always said that where there were ten men in a regiment each doing 100 per cent work the man who is afraid and still does the work is the hero."

Andre Tridon, psychoanalyst, shrugged his shoulders when I asked him about fears and heroes.

"Safety brake isn't working for heroes. That's all," he said. "Or the hero is afraid of being thought a coward. The phobias or fears that you speak of are, of course, memories—those little things that are buried down deep in us. Many of them are unexplainable through the pages of a polite newspaper.

Take the fear of snakes, for instance"——

"Oh," I gasped. Then I remembered that the Mayor wasn't afraid of snakes. He just didn't like them. I don't, either.

"My only fear," continued Dr. Tridon. "Is that I may be crippled in an accident."

As a contrast to the materialistic Dr. Tridon I hastened to the musician, who is also a theosophist. He believes that we live many lives and that what we do not learn in one incarnation we must study again in the next. In other words, that we are "kept in after school." He believes that the memories we have are often recollections of some of these past existences—hence the fears we feel in this life may be the result of terrifying experiences in a past life.

"For instance," he explained eagerly, "I was always afraid of open spaces. It seemed to me that I was always in danger of attack from behind. When I went out to walk I always tried to keep near a wall. One night I had a curious dream. I saw myself dressed in clothes of sixteenth century cut. I was standing at the top of a flight of stairs which led down on the other side of a garden. I was fighting singly against a mob of soldiers, who swarmed up on both sides. Finally there was a rush and I fell, pierced by bayonets. Darkness came and I knew nothing further. That might have been a memory from a past life and might explain my fear of attack."

Darwin, the books say, sought to explain the phenomenon of fear by an appeal to the principles of habit, association and inheritance. The cave man, for instance, attacked unawares by a giant beast, either took to flight, more efficient than graceful, or engaged the animal in fierce combat. Thus the utter exhaustion, pallor, trembling, the result of such exertion, are still set up by the emotion of fear, although the actual exertion is not put forth.

"Well, I don't know how you psychologize it," says Philadelphia Jack O'Brien, who trained Kid McCoy and fifty or more notable wielders of the fist, "but I've seen some fear believe me! Sometimes there's a sort of timidity that makes you kinda sick. I've had to go home myself and take drops. But what am I afraid of generally? Well, maybe it's a knife. I don't like to see knives. Once I saw a doctor operate in a clinic. The knife gleamed, and then he said: 'This man will be dead in fifteen minutes.' Zowie! My knees were knocking together!

"Another thing I'm afraid of is harsh words. I can't stand 'em. If I think somebody is going to be harsh to me I just try to walk out of his way."

Looking at Mr. O'Brien's powerful right, his big head, brawny frame and clear eyes, I wondered that anybody should ever have the courage to be "harsh" to him.

The policeman was next. There he stood in front of the Woolworth Building, the most questioned man in the world and one of the bravest—a hero, who not only has to answer the queries of New York's army of 300,000 transients but keep Broadway traffic regulated and betimes untangle bewildered ladies from untimely taxis.

"What are *you* afraid of?" I asked in a lull in the traffic.

"Nothing," he said. "We have to go everywhere and do our duty."

"Yes, yes," I said, "but the traffic will come heavy in a second. Hurry up and tell me what you're afraid of. You must be afraid of some little thing."

"Well," he finally confessed between wavings of the majestic arm, "I'm a bit uneasy over little dogs when they bark at me. The littler they are the more I don't like 'em."

He could not explain his fear any more than the others, but I'm sure it will do him good to get it out of his system.

What Do You Suppose Scares a Lion Tamer? Subways

Neither could Mabel Stark, the marvelous tiger tamer of Ringling's circus, explain her fear. She is afraid of subways. Daily she enters alone a cage full of fierce beasts. She receives their rough caresses with no terror at all, but in a subway station she trembles and turns pale.

"The trains roaring through the tunnel are worse and more terrifying than any beast I ever met," she said.

The girl reporter whom I interviewed next said that she had never been afraid of anything except railroad yards. She, too, has a morbid fear of the snorting engines.

Former Senator Chauncy M. Depew, facing his eighty-eighth year with sublime serenity and looking back over more than seventy years of public speaking, could not remember that he had ever been afraid of anything. "I dare say I am afraid of a lot of things," he said, "but for the life of me I can't remember what they are. Fears are strange things, though." And he told of a woman whose fear of cats made her clairvoyant. "She could detect the presence of one even though it were hidden from sight," he declared.

Last on the list, which was encouraging me mightily by this time, was the suffragist and hers is the strangest fear of all. She fears praise. In the early part of her career, when her cause was not as popular as it is to-day, she received little but ridicule. She began to feel that people who praised her either wanted some favor shown them or were trying to weaken her by flattery. Now at the close of a long career, when the world recognizes her services and potentates delight to show her honor, she fears the rewards of hard work and blanches at a kind word. Women smile at this, the only weakness they have ever detected in their leader.

MABEL AND MYRTLE AND LADY ASTOR

By JAMES J. MONTAGUE

Illustrations by MERLE JOHNSON

Scene—The Movies. Persons of the drama: Mabel and Myrtle.

MABEL—That's that Lady Astor that got elected to Congress in London.

Myrtle—They don't have no Congress in London. London's a kingdom.

Mabel—Well, she got elected to whatever they have.

Myrtle—I s'pose she got elected to the royal family or somethin'.

Mabel—Don't try to be so funny. They got a place over there where they make laws and all, just like Congress, an' she got elected to it.

Myrtle—How could she be over here if she was in a congress? She'd have to be over there and object to things, wouldn't she?

Mabel—She's come over here at the orders of the Queen to prove that men is weaker than women. I saw where she said that in the papers.

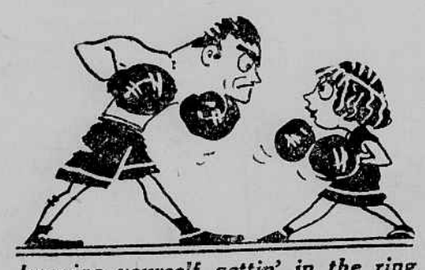
Myrtle—Swell chance she's got of provin' that! If men was weaker than women they'd be bossin' the country, wouldn't they?

Mabel—Well, that's what this now Lady Astor wants 'em to do. She says as soon as they know their strength they'll be bosses of everything.

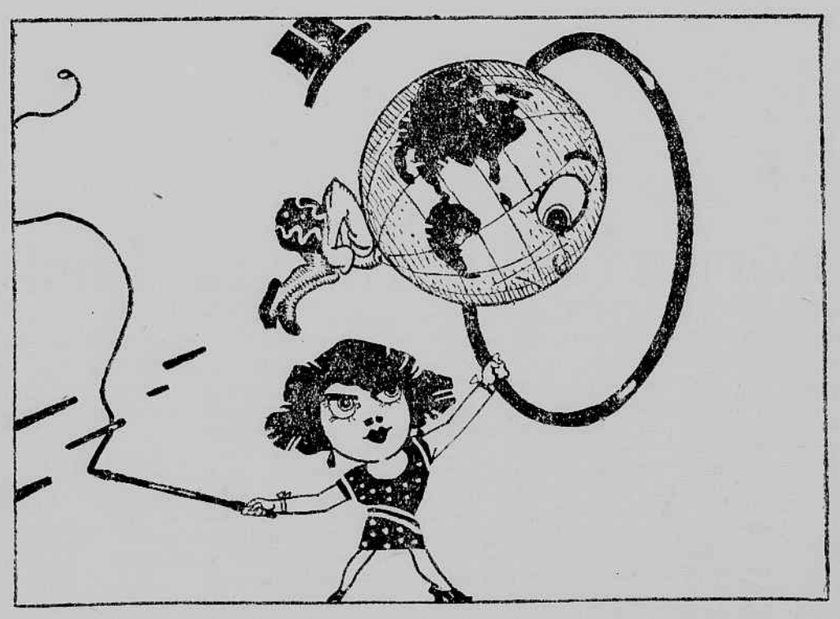
Myrtle—Sounds silly to me—men stronger than women? Ja ever see Mary Pickford standin' on her hands on a cliff and throwin' desperadoes off railroad engines like Doug Fairbanks?

Mabel—Well, o' course, they ain't had no practice yet.

Myrtle—Lotta good practice 'll do 'em! Just imagine yourself gettin' into the ring with this here Jack Dempsey an' tryin' to bust him on the jaw. You could practice a thousand years and never do that.



Imagine yourself gettin' in the ring with Jack Dempsey



She says women is really runnin' the world and men don't know it.

Mabel—Oh, well, she don't mean just physical strength. She means they got more courage. An' I see where a editor says she's right about it.

Myrtle—I don't care what no editor says. They ain't got haff the courage a man's got. Just imagine a big husky man lookin' under a bed to see if they was a burglar there or climbin' up on the bureau when a mouse come into the room! Women ain't got no real courage, an' if they had they'd be ashamed to show it, for the men wouldn't think they could protect 'em an' feel so brave when they was around.

Mabel—That's just the idea. Lady Astor says that women is stronger because they know enough to make the men think that the men are stronger an' get swelled up and look down on 'em an' pity 'em and be kind to 'em.

Myrtle—That's too deep for me. I know I ain't stronger than Tommy, an' if I was to tell him I was, instead of makin' him think I was lookin' up to him all the time, he might get sore on me an' wallop me somethin' fierce.

Mabel—Gee, but you're dumb! You're just provin' what Lady Astor is tryin' to prove—that men are a lot of saps, and if it wasn't for us women handin' em the ear oil all the time they'd never have the nerve to be movie actors or floor walkers or presidents or kings or nothin'. She says women is really runnin' the world an' the men don't know it.

Myrtle—Well, if women is runnin' the world already what does she want to take a vacation an' come over here an' make 'em run it for?

Mabel—She wants 'em to know they're runnin' it, an' to git the credit for it an' hold the jobs, and make the money an' all.

Myrtle—Say, look-a-here! I been lookin' for a chance to let go the job I got for three years now, an' when I can find the guy that will pay the meal checks I'm gonna do it. They ain't no London woman from Congress going to make me think that I oughta be holdin' any job. That's a man's business.

Mabel—That's what you say! But men don't run nothin' right. Looka the crime wave an' the Volstead law, an' the Genoa conference an' everything they're responsible for. Women wouldn't wish nothin' like them on the country.

Myrtle—But I thought you said Lady Astor said women was runnin' the world as things is.

Mabel—Well, she did. Only she thinks they're too kind hearted to the men and let 'em do a lot of foolish law-makin' an' start wars an' get us all in a lotta trouble. She wants all us women to git into Congress an' fix up everything right.

Myrtle—Well, if you should happen to see Lady Astor walkin' down the avenue you just say to her for me that I ain't goin' to run for Congress, an' you tell her that if there's a king, or a duke, or anything over there that wants a wife of a savin' disposition, and her own hair an' complexion, and can buy her some good lookin' clothes an' be a good husband to her, he'll have a chance to keep one woman out o' Congress, anyway.

Just figure a big husky man looking under a bed.